

Osteolepis

Osteolepis ('bone scale') is an extinct genus of lobe-finned fish from the Devonian period. It lived in the Lake Orcadie of northern Scotland.

Osteolepis was about 20 centimetres (7.9 in) long, and covered with large, square scales. The scales and plates on its head were covered in a thin layer of spongy, bony material called cosmine. This layer contained canals which were connected to sensory cells deeper in the skin. These canals ended in pores on the surface, and were probably for sensing vibrations in the water.^[1]

Osteolepis was a rhhipidistian, having a number of features in common with the tetrapods (land-dwelling vertebrates and their descendants), and was probably close to the base of the tetrapod family tree.



Restoration

<i>Osteolepis</i>	
Temporal range: Middle Devonian	
	
<i>Osteolepis macrolepidotus</i> fossil at the Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin	
Scientific classification 	
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Order:	†Osteolepiformes
Family:	†Osteolepidae
Genus:	† <i>Osteolepis</i> Agassiz, 1843

References

- Palmer, D., ed. (1999). *The Marshall Illustrated Encyclopedia of Dinosaurs and Prehistoric Animals*. London: Marshall Editions. p. 43. ISBN 1-84028-152-9.

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